

What is claimed is:

1. An information processing apparatus comprising:

security hardware for storing security key information;

OS start admission means for determining whether or not an input data for user certification is valid when an OS starts based on said security key information read from said security hardware and permitting the OS to start if the determination result is positive;

security key information restoration means for restoring security key information in the security hardware based on predetermined data for restoration;

OS start type selection means for selecting and executing either a first type OS start for generating a system status in which said security key information restoration means is operable (hereafter, referred to as a "first system status") and operating said OS start admission means or a functionally restricted second type OS start for generating a functionally restricted system status in which said security key information restoration means is inoperable (hereafter, referred to as a "second system status") and not operating said OS start admission means;

cancellation means, generated during a period of the second system status, for canceling the operation of said OS start admission means as to the first type OS start; and

cancel release means for releasing cancellation of the operation of said OS start admission means by said cancellation means after the first type OS start having the operation of said OS start admission means canceled by said cancellation means is executed at least once.

2. The information processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the input data for user certification is the data keyed in by the user on the first type OS start.

3. The information processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said data for restoration is generated on generating the security key information in the security hardware so as to render the security key information freely restorable and is stored in an auxiliary storage.

4. The information processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the first and second type OS starts are the starts based on the same OS stored in the same auxiliary storage, and when starting the OS, said OS start type selection means detects whether or not a predetermined user operation is performed so as to select and execute the first type OS start in the case of "no" and the second type OS start in the case of "yes" respectively.

5. The information processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the first and second type OS starts are the starts based on the OSes stored in different auxiliary storage respectively, and when said second OS is readable from the auxiliary storage storing said second OS, said OS start type selection means selects and executes the second type OS start in preference to the first type OS start.
6. The information processing apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein there is erasure means for erasing said cancel release means after said cancel release means releases the cancellation of the operation of said OS start admission means by said cancellation means.
7. The information processing apparatus according to Claim 6, wherein said erasure means is generated by said cancel release means.